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Tales and Trails  
of Wakarusa

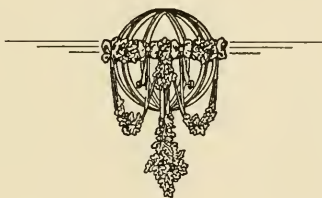


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(Wakurusa)

HATHEY



# Tales and Trails of Wakarusa



BY  
A. M. HARVEY

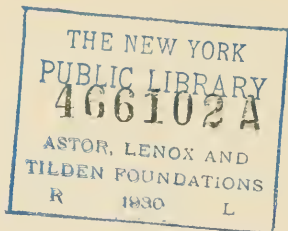
of the Topeka Bar

To John E. Throat whose  
friendship has been  
deeply appreciated by me  
these many years

*[Handwritten signature]*

Crane & Company, Printers  
Topeka, Kansas  
1917

PK



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# Tales and Trails of Wakarusa

Jan 20 year 1930



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## A Forethought and a Dedication

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“A PARADOXICAL philosopher, carrying to the utmost length that aphorism of Montesquieu’s, ‘Happy the people whose annals are tiresome,’ has said; ‘Happy the people whose annals are vacant.’ In which saying, mad as it looks, may there not still be found some grain of reason? For truly, as it has been written, ‘Silence is divine,’ and of Heaven; so in all earthly things, too, there is a silence which is better than any speech. Consider it well, the Event, the thing which can be spoken of and recorded; is it not in all cases some disruption, some solution of continuity? Were it even a glad Event, it involves change, involves loss (of active force); and so far, either in the past or in the present, is an irregularity, a disease. Stillest perseverance were our blessedness—not dislocation and alteration—could they be avoided.

“The oak grows silently in the forest a thousand years; only in the thousandth year, when the woodman arrives with his ax, is there heard an echoing through the solitudes; and the oak announces itself when, with far-sounding crash, it falls. How silent, too, was the planting of the acorn, scattered from the lap of some wandering wind! Nay, when our oak flowered, or put on its leaves (its glad Events), what

## *Tales and Trails of Wakarusa*

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shout of proclamation could there be? Hardly from the most observant a word of recognition. These things befell not, they were slowly done; not in an hour, but through the flight of days: what was to be said of it? This hour seemed altogether as the last was, as the next would be.

“It is thus everywhere that foolish Rumor babbles not of what was done, but of what was misdone or undone; and foolish History (ever, more or less, the written epitomized synopsis of Rumor) knows so little that were not as well unknown. Attila Invasions, Walter-the-Penniless Crusades, Sicilian Vespers, Thirty-Years’ Wars: mere sin and misery; not work, but hindrance of work! For the Earth all this while was yearly green and yellow with her kind harvests; the hand of the craftsman, the mind of the thinker, rested not; and so, after all and in spite of all, we have this so glorious high-domed blossoming World; concerning which poor History may well ask with wonder, Whence it came? She knows so little of it, knows so much of what obstructed it, what would have rendered it impossible. Such, nevertheless, by necessity or foolish choice, is her rule and practice; whereby that paradox, ‘Happy the people whose annals are vacant,’ is not without its true side.”—*Carlyle*.

This book of tales and trails of people whose annals are vacant, because they were peaceful and happy, is dedicated to the nineteen-year-

*A Forethought and a Dedication*

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old soldier boys of 1917 and to their comrades ; and especially to that nineteen-year-old soldier, Randal Cone Harvey, whose image and whose service is with us by day and by night. May their service help bring to a war-cursed world such peace that the annals of all men will be stories of love, companionship and association one with another.

A. M. HARVEY.



# Contents

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|   | <i>Page</i> |
|---|-------------|
| Title . . . . .                                   | 1           |
| Forethought and Dedication . . . . .              | 5           |
| The Trail of the Sac and Fox . . . . .            | 13          |
| The Stone Bridge . . . . .                        | 17          |
| The Newcomers . . . . .                           | 21          |
| An Old-Timer . . . . .                            | 27          |
| Mother Newcomer . . . . .                         | 35          |
| John MacDonald . . . . .                          | 43          |
| Jake Self . . . . .                               | 49          |
| The Yankee and His Hog—and Other Troubles . . .   | 55          |
| The Trail That Never Was Traveled . . . . .       | 59          |
| The Conversion of Cartmill . . . . .              | 63          |
| A Fourth of July Speech . . . . .                 | 75          |
| The Phantom Fisherman, and Other Ghosts . . . . . | 81          |
| An Indian Christmas . . . . .                     | 93          |



# Tales and Trails of Wakarusa





## The Trail of the Sac and Fox

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IT WAS during the '40's that the Sac and Fox Indians started on their long journey to take up their home in the land provided for them in Kansas, being a portion of the present counties of Lyon, Osage, and Franklin. In the year 1846 a large number of them had camped in the Kansas River Valley near the present site of Topeka, and because of their friendship with the Shawnees they were permitted to remain there for some time before moving on. Many of them formed attachments and friendships among the Shawnees and Pottawatomies, and remained with them. After the main body of the Sac and Fox moved on to their own lands, their associations with the Shawnees and other friendly Indians were such that there was much travel back and forth.

The trails leading south from the Kansas River Valley all fell into the "Oregon" or "California" road, and along that the Indians traveled to the trading village of Carthage, a

few miles northeast of the present village of Berryton. From there, several trails set off toward the Sac and Fox lands. One of the principal trails wound over the hills and down through a long ravine to the Wakarusa Valley, and across that river at the ford where the great stone bridge now stands, due south of Berryton; and from there it wound around the hill through the woods and again over the plains. Afterwards a public road was laid out upon this trail, called, in the Shawnee County records, the "Sac and Fox Road," but usually spoken of as the "Ottawa State Road."

Just south of the Wakarusa crossing and a few hundred yards around the brow of the hill, there lies a parcel of level ground, which was an ideal place for camping. It is now occupied by the public road, and church and school-house grounds. This was a famous camping place for the Sac and Fox and all other Indians who used the trail. If you step up to the stone fence just east of the school-house, looking over you will notice a deep ditch washed out down the creek bank, on the side of which a large oak tree stands, with

## *The Trail of the Sac and Fox*

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many of its roots exposed. This ditch marks the path first used by the Indians as they went back and forth from the camping ground to the spring of sweet, beautiful water that flows from out the rocks at the foot of the hill.

Modern history of this portion of the valley begins with this camping place. It was not only a resting place, but a place where consultations and conferences were held, and where the eloquent ones told of the glory of Black Hawk, the wisdom of Keokuk, and the splendid history of their tribe. It was said that the older men were despondent, but that the younger men thought that there was a possibility of rebuilding their tribal fortunes in the new country, and that some day they would be as powerful and as prosperous as they had hoped to be in Iowa and upon other lands belonging to them.

But the Sac and Fox are gone; the trail knows them no more; the sweet waters still flow from the beautiful spring, and a white man who never knew them has built a house near by on the bluff by the side of the road.



## The Stone Bridge

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THE Indian trail had given away and had gradually become merged into a public road, here and there forced back to section lines, but in the main sustaining its diagonal course across the country and being known as the Topeka and Ottawa State Road.

Jacob Welchans was not only an extraordinarily fine surveyor, whose corner-stones and monuments are now and always will be recognized in Shawnee County as the best evidence of the location of land boundaries, but he also engaged in country school-teaching, and a number of times taught in the little school-house established near the Wakarusa River and by the old Sac and Fox spring. The ford across the Wakarusa at this point was not an extra good one. The bottom was rock, but there was a steep hill on one side and a low, springy place on the other; and, excepting times when the stream was very low, the water was of considerable depth over the ford-

## *Tales and Trails of Wakarusa*

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ing place, and it was not an uncommon sight to see a farmer's boy on an old gray mare fording children across in the morning and in the afternoon, so that they could go to and from school.

This was long before city men commenced buying up farm land, and therefore the Wakarusa Valley was quite well populated, and the little school boasted an attendance of from fifty to sixty children during the entire school year. Jacob Welchans became ambitious that there should be a bridge across the Wakarusa at that point, not only for the benefit of the school children and the neighborhood generally, but because that was the fording place for the travel that fell into the Topeka and Ottawa State Road. He called attention of the county officers to the importance of the road to the city of Topeka and to the county of Shawnee, and by sheer force of character he impressed upon them the conviction that a bridge should be erected at the place indicated, and that it should be a stone bridge builded from bed rock, and to stay.

The usual formalities were indulged in,

## *The Stone Bridge*

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and the contract was let to George Evans, who commenced the work in the summer of 1878, and when the school commenced in October the bridge was in course of construction. It was a great time for the neighborhood and for the school children, who spent much of their intermission periods around the work and the workmen. Some of the workmen were negroes who talked French, and they were a lot of fun. They camped at different places around near the spring, boiled their coffee in old tomato cans, slept on the ground, hunted squirrels and rabbits between working hours, and in many other ways exhibited interesting activities, to the delight of the youngsters. After one arch of the bridge was up and the false work had been taken out, it commenced to crack and fold and double, and then fell. The school children had just arrived on the scene after being dismissed at recess, and it seemed for all the world as though the arch had fallen down to give them the benefit of the crash and the excitement. No one was hurt, and the wreck was soon cleared away, so that the work could go on.

## *Tales and Trails of Wakarusa*

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The bridge was finished in due time, and for nearly forty years it has justified the faith of those who planned and constructed it. Once, after an extraordinary flood that filled the waterways almost to the top, Jim Baker said : “She is a mighty good makeshift in time of high water ; no tin bridge for me.” It not only served the purpose of travel, but it has become a landmark in southern Shawnee County, and it always will be a monument to the old trail and to the wisdom and foresight of Jacob Welchans and the other county officers who were responsible for its being constructed.



## The Newcomers

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ONE November day in 1877 the Newcomers unloaded from a Santa Fe train just then arrived in the city of Topeka, the exact time being about four o'clock in the afternoon. There was Mother Newcomer and five boys, the oldest being less than five years older than the youngest. On the platform they met Father Newcomer, who, together with a country lad, was awaiting the arrival. They gathered their baggage together, and the country boy led the way across the street to where his team, hitched to a farm wagon, was tied. Each of the horses was fastened with a heavy rope about the neck, which was looped over his nose and tied fast to a post, and each of them jumped and snorted and pulled at every movement or noise made by the train, which was still upon the track.

The train pulled out, the Newcomers loaded up, the boy managed to quiet down the horses, and untied one after the other, holding the

lines in his hand all the time; and after he had tied up the last rope, he jumped into the front of the wagon bed, holding fast to the lines or reins, and up the street they went. After a brief stop at Cole's grocery, and again at Manspeaker's, they started out over the diagonal road leading to the southeast from the city. At the top of the Highland Park hill they looked back and saw Topeka in the valley, and it looked like a cluster of brick houses, with scarcely a tree in sight; and yet it was beautiful in the glancing rays of the setting sun, and all of them felt that it was to be the center of that country which was their new home and the place of their future activity.

Before it was fully dark the farm wagon had covered the distance of some fourteen miles from the city, traveling nearly all the way in a diagonal, southeasterly direction, and had wound up at the home of William Matney, on Lynn Creek, a mile below Tevis. The ride was a wonderful experience for the little Newcomers. They soon learned that one of the horses was named Greeley and the

other Banks; but it was some years before they understood that these names indicated that the owner was a Democrat who knew the names of the candidates upon his ticket some five years before, when the horses were colts. The autumn sky was beautiful, and the light frosts had given a brown tinge to the prairie, and it seemed to them that every breath of air was a draught of the elixir of life.

That evening dozens of persons from ten miles around called at the Matney home to welcome and visit with the Newcomers. They were nearly all old-timers, and they represented former inhabitants of at least seven of the States of the United States and three foreign countries. There was a Yankee from Maine, a Digger from the hills of North Carolina, a Mudsucker from Illinois, and all kinds of Cornercrackers from Kentucky, besides a fine old Englishman and a sturdy German; and they told the Newcomer boys that the school-teacher was a Scotchman who talked through his nose and said lots of funny things, and that further up the creek lived a Manxman by the name of Quayle. It seems that

Kansas had gathered these people from many corners of the earth, to the end that they might be blended into a new people with a new spirit that should mark the character of a new State.

The Newcomers did not know that they were newcomers for some days, nor until they heard people calling them by that name. One day one of the boys rode with John Oliver to Carbondale; and as Oliver pulled up to the sidewalk in front of a store, someone called out, "John, where did you get that kid?" And John answered, "He belongs to a newcomer just moved on the crick. He's got a whole passel of 'em. I seed this 'un in the road and fetched him along." John Oliver was from Tennessee, and he had his own peculiar way of expressing himself. He was a lot of fun for the Yankee neighbor.

The Newcomers were soon settled in a house of their own near the present site of the stone bridge, and every day of that glorious fall and winter was a day of enjoyment to them; and over and over, as they gathered around the big fireplace of an evening, they rejoiced together because of the glorious wel-

## *The Newcomers*

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come that Kansas had given them, and of the more glorious welcome, if possible, that had been given to them by the people of Kansas—old and newcomers—from so many different lands, with so many different ideas and so many different ways and habits, yet all filled with that exaltation which came to them like a breath of freedom from the prairie, and has made them and others like them into a new race, filled with a new spirit, which we call Kansas.



## An Old-Timer

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**D**URING the midsummer of 1854, James Lynn and William Lynn started across the prairies from Westport, Missouri, to find homes in Kansas. With a stalwart pair of oxen yoked to a heavy wagon they proceeded slowly but surely westward, and finally, following up the Wakarusa Valley and out along one of its tributaries, they camped one night after a blistering hot August day near a spring that flowed from among a pile of stones and boulders that had been deposited at that point in great abundance by some glacier that must have covered this part of Kansas centuries ago. The flowing spring reminded them of Kentucky, and they concluded that then and there one of them had found a home. James Lynn drove his stake into the ground and said that it was his. Afterwards they traveled further up the little stream and located another claim, and William Lynn marked it and claimed it for his own. The

## *Tales and Trails of Wakarusa*

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location of these two settlements caused the little stream to be named Lynn Creek, and so it is known from the hills among which it rises on through Berryton, Tevis, and into Wakarusa near Richland.

The hardships of pioneer life were too much for James Lynn, and he died within a few years after their settlement ; but William Lynn weathered the storm and lived upon the land thus picked out by him on that August day until his death, which occurred in February, 1908. At the time of his death he had lived in Kansas nearly fifty-four years, and he was then one hundred and two years old. When it was found that he was dead, one of his sons called one of the Newcomer boys, who then lived in Topeka, over the phone and said : "Pap is dead. You know he never was much as to churches, and we just thought that we would ask you to come out and say something at his funeral."

And, of course, the Newcomer boy said that he would ; and on the day appointed he drove out to the old Lynn home, and among the neighbors and friends gathered around he



## *An Old-Timer*

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stood by the coffin of this old-timer and looked down upon his face, which resembled a hickory nut worn and preserved with age, and in part he said :

“One October day in about the year 1837, in Madison County, Kentucky, a small boy, the oldest son of a widowed mother, had set himself to work trying to split clapboards to make a shelter for some stock that belonged to his mother. He was working hard and making slow progress, when a stalwart young man came along on his way to his own duties of the day. The young man stopped, spoke kindly to him, and commenced helping with the work. What had promised to be a day of toil became a day of pleasure, and when the sun sank low in the west on that day, the boards had been made and the shelter erected, and the boy and man were happy—the one scarcely more happy than the other. That boy was my father; and that young man, who was his friend from the beginning, was none other than the grand old man whose lifeless body lies before us today.

“With the recollection of the story of this act of simple kindness in my mind, the request was to me a command when the family communicated to me their desire that I should speak at this funeral.

“The span of this life was so great and covered so many years that you and I can hardly realize the length of it. He was old enough to remember the stirring

## *Tales and Trails of Wakarusa*

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times of the battle of New Orleans. He was a man grown when the Kentucky soldiers came marching home victorious from the war with Mexico, and when the Kentucky dead were brought home from Buena Vista's battlefield and all Kentucky stood in mourning as O'Hara read his immortal poem, commencing :

“The muffled drum's sad roll has beat the soldier's last tattoo,  
No more on life's parade shall meet that brave and fallen few ;  
On Fame's eternal camping ground their silent tents are spread,  
And Glory guards with solemn round the bivouac of the dead.’

“When the civil war came on he was old enough that his sons became soldiers in the army. When I first knew him—more than thirty years ago—he was strong and rugged, but an old man.

“As you and I have now gathered to say the last word and do the last service for this old friend, I feel that we are standing on sacred ground. We realize that we are today confronted by the two great mysteries—one of life and the other of death. Life—that preserved in this man a constitutional strength that kings would give millions to possess, that coursed the red blood through his veins, and that made his right arm strong as an iron shaft for more than three-quarters of a century—is indeed a mystery ; but Death—that stopped the flowing blood and rested the tired limbs—is a greater mystery. And, strange to say, at a time like this, when these two mysteries seem closer and more oppressive, we are met with the brightest, best and greatest hope of the human race—the hope of im-

## *An Old-Timer*

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mortality, of life that will endure forever, a hope that belongs to every man, of every religion, of every race, under every sun. Death waited long and patiently for him. With muffled oar he guarded close the nearer shore of the silent river. Many of his friends came down and crossed the river, and finally he came. It is easy for me to believe that on the other shore he saw a familiar face, and that a friendly hand and a strong arm were joined to his to help him up the other bank, as he had helped his friend on this side. And so I say that we stand today on sacred ground as we are brought to a contemplation of the solemn fact that the sun is set and the day is done for one who used to walk upright among us.

“He saw the red man give place to the white man, and he saw the buffalo herds melt away that domestic animals might take their place. He heard the shriek of the first locomotive that trundled its way over the line of the great railway that traverses this part of the county. And he saw the first break of virgin soil when men commenced to build our splendid Capitol.

“His native State had been called ‘the dark and bloody ground.’ Indian tribes had struggled for the possession of its hunting grounds, and had fought and killed and waged their wars until they said the ground was dark and bloody. And, strange to say, these same hunting grounds became scenes of conflict, bloodshed and war long after the white man had taken them. In that State were honest, industrious, hospitable men

## *Tales and Trails of Wakarusa*

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and women; but human life was cheap, and everywhere men were ready at all times to fight and die for what they thought was right. It was the dark and bloody ground. It was a strange fate that took this pioneer from Kentucky and gave him a home in Kansas, which was soon to become the battle ground of the first conflict between slavery and freedom, and in truth the dark and bloody ground of the West.

“He lived to see the end of this quarrel. He had known Kansas when she was bleeding and torn, and then had seen her rise, beautiful, strong, and without a wound. He had experienced the horrors of war and murder, but lived to know that peace possessed the State.

“His education was limited, his life was humble, and he knew not ambition. You and I may learn a lesson from the fact that the great Giver of Life gave to this humble man all of this experience and all of this contact with human affairs, and a full round century of life in this strange old world. It is written that certain things are withheld from the wise and prudent and revealed unto babes, and who can say that this life has not fulfilled a great purpose. Here is a man who lived a long, industrious life and never knew the greed, avarice and crime that comes with the modern struggle for money. Political strife was to him a closed book. He knew nothing of the great paintings of the great masters in art, but he had seen Nature in her beauty and grandeur, and it was more beautiful than any

## *An Old-Timer*

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painting made by man. He had seen the sunrise in a thousand forms, and the Storm King had builded mountains of black and gold for him. And the great prairies and the stalwart forests had made pictures for him. He knew what beauty was.

“The story told at the beginning of this talk is only illustrative of his kindness of heart. No person was too poor or despised to enlist his sympathy and help in time of trouble.

“He knew little of creeds and thought little of doctrines, and yet his life was fashioned after that simple plan given to mankind by the great Teacher who sat down with publicans and sinners and rebuked hypocrisy wherever it was found.

“This is but a brief memorial to the life and character of William Lynn. His work is done. Although he lived far beyond the allotted time for man, his death has come as a tragedy to his family and friends. Comfort is gathered from the fact that his life was one of service. Service in the building of his country and his State, service to his family, and service to his fellow-man. No honest effort is ever lost. Service—honest and faithful—has a force and influence that will live forever. We can understand that the name of this man will be perpetuated because his service in building a home along this little watercourse has caused it to be named ‘Lynn Creek,’ and that his name has been given to a school-house and to a church and to a political division of a township, and yet every other deed of

## *Tales and Trails of Wakarusa*

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honest service from the beginning to the end of his long and useful life will live and share in framing the lives, conduct and destiny of those who follow him so long as time shall last.”

## Mother Newcomer

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**M**OTHER NEWCOMER certainly enjoyed Kansas, and she soon became as well known as an old-timer. At home she was the cook and the baker and the dressmaker and the tailor, besides doing a part of all other work about the place. She knew where the best greens could be picked in early spring, and the best berries in the summer, and she either made the boys pick them or she took her snake-killing dog with her and picked them herself; and all through the year she was a part of all the activities of the home; and she enjoyed it all.

When a babe was to be born anywhere for miles around, she was there. Sometimes she was the lone attendant, and again she helped Dr. Taylor, who had been in the valley from the beginning; and more than once she worked with some young doctor who was so panicky because the baby didn't hurry that she would have to tell him to keep his feet on

the ground, and that millions of babies had been born before a doctor or a medical college had ever been discovered. One night at midnight she waked up one of the boys, and told him that his father was out saddling the pony, and that he must go for Dr. Woods, who lived about five miles to the west. The boy finally wakened up and got his clothes on, and found that she was just ready to leave with a neighbor for his home, and that someone must go for the doctor. The pony had been saddled by that time, and was tied with a heavy rope to a tree near the door. The boy put on plenty of clothes and then mounted the pony, while his father held the little beast to keep him from standing on his head. The father pointed to the seven stars then showing up in the southern sky and told the boy to keep them to his left and to ride until he had crossed the railroad, and then go up to the first house and yell until someone came out so that he could inquire for the home of Dr. Woods. The directions being given, the pony was untied and turned loose, with the end of the rope fastened to the horn of the saddle.



Of course the pony ran off for about a mile, but the boy kept him headed in the right direction, and after a while he slowed down and made the journey in good shape. When Dr. Woods was roused he made the boy come in and get warm while he got his horse, and together they rode back, and long before day the doctor had joined Mother Newcomer at the neighbor's house.

Dr. Taylor still lives at his old home about three miles north of the stone bridge. He is a fine type of the pioneer doctor, and he not only knows the books, but he knows men and women, and especially Kansas men and women; and more than that, he knows Kansas and its climate, its tricks, and its good moods and its bad ones. For nearly fifty years he has ministered to the sick and the afflicted, and those who thought they were sick or afflicted, along the roads and trails of Wakarusa; and none could do it better or more faithfully. Doctor Woods was of the same type. He always traveled horseback, usually riding a large, strong, rough horse;

and he knew the bridle-paths, and where to ford the streams.

She was always interested in the school, and one of the first things that attracted her special attention was the fact that only four months of school was provided for in the year. She started an agitation for a longer term, and in the midst of it the word came through the country that either by a statute or a decision of the Supreme Court women were allowed to vote at school elections; and therefore upon school-meeting day she had one of the boys hitch a team to the farm wagon and they drove round and gathered up and took six women to the school meeting. They proved to be the balance of power, and a new director was elected, and a vote was carried for nine months school and for a levy large enough to pay a good teacher. The records show that from that day to this the old district has never been disgraced with a short term, nor meager provisions for school support.

With all her activities, her best and greatest service was in her tender, sympathetic help-

fulness and coöperation with her husband and children. There never was a day so dark but that she was full of good cheer and comfort. One terrible August day a hot wind blew across the State like a blast from Hell; leaves that were green in the morning could be burned with a match at noon; and the crops in every field seemed doomed for destruction. When the men came in at midday they were sorely discouraged, but they found a splendid dinner on the table, the floor scrubbed to make the room cool, and the blinds down toward the south; and Mother Newcomer, with a clean apron and cheerful face, sitting at the end of the table, almost made them forget the terrible hurricane of heat that was being driven across the country. During the meal some of them spoke of their discouragement, but she was full of plans as to how they might pull through; and when some said there would be no corn and no feed, she insisted that there would be a harvest of some kind. In keeping with a custom of hers, she enforced her views by a quotation: "Summer and winter, seed time and harvest, shall not

fail so long as time shall last." From this she argued that there was sure to be a harvest, and they all went out with better cheer. And indeed there was some harvest, and they were able to hold on for another year.

Years afterwards, she wrote all the boys who were away from home and asked them to be there Thanksgiving Day; and they were there. No one believed that it would be the last time they were all to be together; but all during the day there was a feeling of tenderness about the occasion; and it was the last time.

That day as they all sat about the great table and talked of their experiences in the new country, and one told of this adventure or this experience or another, finally one of the boys voiced the sentiment of all the others when he said: "In making this home here, Mother has done more than all the rest." On that same day she repeated another familiar quotation of hers, which the boys have always remembered: "I have been young and now I am old, and I have not seen the righteous forsaken nor his seed begging bread;"

## *Mother Newcomer*

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and she said: “Do right as you understand and believe the right to be and you will be righteous, and have peace, and the promise will be yours.”



## John MacDonald

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A SCOTCH lad who appeared to be scarcely out of his teens came to the neighborhood one October day and was soon employed as a farm hand. This employment did not last long, because the school ma'am got married, and he made application and was selected as the teacher in the district school. George Franks looked him over and said: "There's one thing certain. He's not liable to get married before the term is over."

He was certainly an awkward lad, and his peculiar brogue as well as the unusual phraseology employed by him was a source of extraordinary amusement and entertainment to everyone. Of course, he was welcomed and made at home, just as every stranger was, and good-natured frontier manners prevented fun being made of him to his face. However, and notwithstanding the best that could be done, it was not unusual for a company of young folks to get around him and ask him

questions, and they frequently burst into laughter over his quaint expressions. It embarrassed him very much at the time; and in his later years he often said that he sometimes blushed even then to think of what he had said and how the young folks laughed at him. Purely as a matter of self-defense, he developed the habit of saying things to make folks laugh; and, having an active, ingenious mind, he soon developed into a humorist, and this characteristic obtained with him during all his life.

He became one of the fixtures in the community, and not only taught the Berry Creek school, but nearly every other school for a number of miles around. Although he was a thorough Scotchman, raised with all the strictness which his hardy people and the Presbyterian faith provided, he was known among school children as "John Easy"; and it is to be recorded that during the many years that he was a Wakarusa Valley school teacher he never struck a pupil nor laid violent hands on one. How he managed to get along without doing so is still a marvel to the old-timers in



the neighborhood. It was probably because of the fact that he was a continuous and ardent student himself, always having on hand, in addition to school work, one or more scientific or literary studies which he pursued, and the youngsters caught the spirit from him, and on this account were not hard to manage. It can be truly said of him that by his conduct, his life, and his teachings, he coaxed and led the way of his pupils to higher education and to better things. Again, the idea that he was liable to say something that would make you laugh possessed the children as well as the grown folks, and he knew it, and frequently used his ability as a humorist to keep attention to himself and to the work the pupils had in hand. One day, during a drill in history, he pointed to a lad from the most outspoken Democratic family in the vicinity, and said, "You write the names of all the *Republican Presidents* on the blackboard." The way he said it caused a lot of merriment. The boy stepped to the board and wrote the full list, and, after the last name he wrote, "The last of that bright band." Every one watched the

teacher when he looked over the work. He said not a word, but took a piece of chalk and wrote like he was digging into the board, "Do you think so?"

To close friends he would confess that he loved the taste of every intoxicating liquor (and in his native land among those surrounding him it was a common practice for nearly everyone to use strong drink of some character), yet he never drank, and he was among the first to advocate and work for the destruction of the liquor traffic in Kansas.

His splendid work as a teacher made him friends and acquaintances throughout the county, and in course of time he was elected County Superintendent, which position he held for many years. It was his custom as Superintendent to go on foot when visiting the different schools of the county, and he knew every trail and bridle-path. It was a treat to the pupils and teacher to have him come slipping in at the door, after which he would take off his wraps and "loaf around," as he called it. He always left something in the way of help to those who were trying to

learn. His life along the trails of Wakarusa was a tour of usefulness, and he had the confidence of everyone, from the most well-to-do to the poorest ; and from the most respected to the worthless.

As years went by he married and commenced the establishment of a home on a farm purchased and owned by him. He mixed newspaper and educational work with his farming, and this took him away from home much of the time. One day he returned after a short absence and found his home desolated. It is enough to say that it was the consuming tragedy of his life, and it left him alone among men. Very few aside from his country neighbors ever knew of his trouble. Years went by, and honors came to him in educational work, not only in the State but throughout the United States and the world ; and his old neighbors on Wakarusa often thought of him and sympathized with him and had heartaches for him, because they knew how he suffered ; and he knew that they knew, and they knew that he knew that they knew.

It was some years after MacDonald had left

the farm that one of the Berry Creek school-boys, having grown to young manhood, was about to leave home for service as a soldier. His days were full of things to do, and he did not take time to hunt up old friends to say good-bye, but early in the morning of the day he was to go he met MacDonald on the sidewalk near his home. He was waiting for the young man, and he took him by the hand and looked at him as he often looked at him as a boy, and said, "I shall think of you often. God bless you. Good-bye." The beautiful May morning, with the sun just breaking "over the top," was something to remember, but the earnest man and his eloquent words of farewell were burned into the mind and heart of the younger man, and they gave him strength and courage.

Such was John MacDonald.

## Jake Self

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ON A SLAB in the Ridgeway graveyard there is this inscription: "Jacob W. Self. Died January 27, 1873."

Jake Self was forty-nine years old when he died, and he had been a pioneer and a plainsman since his boyhood. He lived on the old Berry farm near the stone bridge. On the morning of the day of his death he, together with Wash Townsend and S. A. Sprague, went on horseback to Carbondale. Carbondale was then a thriving little village, with a few stores, a blacksmith shop, and about a dozen saloons. It was a warm day for winter, and the roads were muddy and sloppy. Late in the afternoon Self and his companions mounted their horses and started for home. They noticed that the wind had commenced to blow from the north and was quite cold, and that the ground cracked and broke under the horses' feet on account of the frozen crust that then covered it. As they left the village, riding

briskly toward the northeast, they discovered that clouds had overcast the sky, and that low in the northwest they were heavy, and had that liquid-black appearance that settlers described as inky. The breeze from the northwest soon developed into a strong wind, with an occasional bit of snow, and it became colder and colder. By the time they reached the upper crossing of Berry Creek the air was full of snow, dry, hard, and driven fiercely by the wind. The men were suffering from the intense cold, and Townsend suggested that they take the creek road, which followed the lowland from that point to their home, but Self, who was riding a wild and spirited horse, insisted that he would ride across the prairie, and when the others separated from him, he called back that he would beat them home. He rode at a gallop by the Elliott school-house. John MacDonald, the teacher, stood in the door and watched him, and meditated upon his recklessness and upon the curse of strong drink, for he sat his horse as one who had been drinking and was full of power therefrom, though not intoxicated. Sprague and

## *Jake Self*

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Townsend followed the course taken by them, and arrived at the farm shortly after dark, but Self was not there. They waited an hour, then another, and becoming alarmed concluded that Self had lost his way and that they would go out and try to find him. By this time the storm had become a frightful blizzard, the temperature far below zero, and the snow and wind driving like a hurricane. The two men rode westward onto the prairie, and as nearly as they could, they followed the road which they had expected Self to take. On account of the darkness and the storm, it became necessary for them to tie their horses together to prevent their being separated, and in this way they rode for an hour or more, and then concluded to give up the search and return home. They rode rapidly, and suddenly plunged into a deep ravine, which indicated to them that they were going in the wrong direction, and then they realized that they were lost and unable to agree on the direction they should take to reach home. Sprague suggested to Townsend that since the storm was coming from the northwest

they might ride directly in the teeth of it and finally reach the Wakarusa bottom, and that then they could follow the stream downward to the farm. They adopted this plan, and after considerable difficulty reached the low wooded land along the stream at a point near where the Santa Fe Railroad now crosses the valley, and about one o'clock they were home. Each of them was frozen about the face, hands and feet. Self was not there.

They stayed up all night looking for him, and about four o'clock in the morning his horse came galloping home without him. Early in the morning, they, together with a party of neighbors, went out upon the prairie, and at a point about two miles from the farm they found his body completely frozen, crouched in the snow. The beaten snow near the body indicated that the horse had stood near him for a long time after he had fallen. A full pint of whiskey was in his pocket. Some said that he should have drunk more when he felt the whiskey die out of him and the cold come in; but one of them crushed



## *Jake Self*

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the bottle on a wagon wheel, and they took the body home.

It was afterwards learned that he had ridden up to one farm house three times and inquired the way home, and each time started off in the wrong direction. He had lost the sense of direction and was tempest tossed, like a ship in mid-ocean without a pilot.

The next day three sturdy men started for Topeka with a heavy team and wagon, and shovels to be used in getting through the snow-drifts. They were going for a coffin for Jake Self, and it took hard work for almost the entire day before they reached the city.

And so Jake Self died, January 27, 1873, as indicated upon the marble slab.



## The Yankee and His Hog—and Other Troubles

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MARCUS DOYEN came straight from the heart of Maine to Wakarusa. His family consisted of himself and wife and an old mother who had made the journey with them. It did not take him long to provide comfortable habitations for himself and one horse and a cow, and he interested everyone by the ingenuity with which he constructed his buildings, so tight that even the Kansas wind could not blow through them, and as though he were calculating on the same kind of temperature during winter time that his home State produced.

He looked about him and got acquainted with his neighbors, and soon concluded that he should buy a hog to fatten up for the small amount of pork and lard that his family would need. Big Aaron Coberly sold him a fine, husky pig, and when he delivered him he found that the Yankee had made a good

pen for him, not very big, but stout, and with a warm bed fixed in one corner that was well sheltered. A few days afterwards, one of the neighbors came by, and Doyen called him over to see his hog, and said:

“He’s surely got the right name, because he eats more than the horse and cow both. By George, he is a perfect hog; and he hasn’t any sense about his bed; has picked up every straw and carried it over to the other corner of his pen, and keeps it there. He’s also making trouble by digging into the ground with his nose, and has one hole where he’s dug so deep that he nearly stands on his head when he’s working in it.”

The neighbor advised him to cut the hog’s nose in slashes or put rings in it, but told him that the more of a hog the hog made of himself, the better hog he would be. The Yankee scratched his head as he received this advice, and said nothing; but a few days afterwards the neighbor was going near his place and heard a terrible squealing, and went over and found the Yankee hanging onto the fence of the pig pen with a hoe in his hand, and he

## *The Yankee and His Hog*

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noticed that the hog's face was covered with blood where the Yankee had been trying to slash his nose with the hoe ground sharp as a razor. When the neighbor stopped to observe the proceedings, Doyen told him that this hog was the trial of his life; that he hated to cut his nose, but had finally concluded he must do so, and that he couldn't throw him down and handle him himself, so he had sharpened up his hoe and was trying to fix him so he couldn't dig in the ground. Resting on the hoe for a minute, the Yankee said :

“He's one of my troubles, sure enough; but we've had others. My wife's had an awful time trying to wash our clothes. The water will turn all sorts of colors and mix up like buttermilk every time she puts soap in it, and finally someone told her that she had to break the water. I've heard of breaking horses and colts and oxen, but I never heard of breaking water; but, by George, that's what we're having to do!”



## The Trail That Never Was Traveled

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AS YOU drive from Topeka to the stone bridge, just before you enter the valley, you notice what may appear to be a road extending eastward between two fences set about thirty feet apart. The way is rough and stony, and full of weeds and brush, and if you ask whether it is a laid-out road, you will be informed that it is, and that years ago road viewers went over it and established it as one of the public roads of Shawnee County. If you ask whether it was ever traveled, the answer will be, "no." And if you ask why it was laid out, this will be the explanation :

William Cartmill, a tall, vigorous, turbulent Irishman, owned the land to the north. George Franks, a hard-working, sturdy, honest, conservative Englishman owned the land to the south. They never agreed about anything. Franks was a church man, and loved peace and quiet. Stern necessity had taught him the ways of a pioneer. He could build a

good log house without a nail or any other article that would cost money, and with very few tools beside his ax and broadax. Cartmill paid no attention to the church, and was always in a row of some kind. He had a good heart, but he was naturally full of devilment, and he enjoyed making trouble for Franks. He soon learned that Franks was afraid of him, or at least he treated Franks as though he were. The fact was, that the Englishman did not fear him, but simply wanted to avoid trouble with him ; but it was all the same to Cartmill, and gave him an excuse for making Franks all the trouble he could. He found Franks starting to build a fence one day along the line, and went out and ordered him off, and yelled after him as he went :

“You know bloody well that the line’s four hundred yards further south, and if I catch yez here any more I’ll cut your heart out and set it up on a sharp rock.”

Of course, Franks was right about the line, but Cartmill quarreled with him until it became necessary to get a county surveyor to make a definite location and plant the corner-



## *The Trail That Never Was Traveled*

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stone. Franks then built a fence just two feet south of the line, and as soon as he finished it Cartmill hitched onto it. This gave Cartmill the use of the fence and two feet of the Franks land. Of course, Franks didn't like this, and he tried to find some legal way to get rid of the annoyance without bringing a direct suit against Cartmill, and so he petitioned for a road to be laid out. The neighbors helped him with it, although they all knew that the road never would be traveled, and thus it was that years ago there was established a laid-out road along the brow of the Wakarusa hills, running over gullies and bluffs where no one would or could travel.

Cartmill used the lane for a calf pasture in the summer and a place to shoot rabbits in the winter, and always claimed that he had the best of the row.

To this day the lane is a rendezvous for rabbit and quail, and as the country boys tramp through it they thank all the lucky stars for the row between the English and the Irish.



## The Conversion of Cartmill

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THE Berry Creek Methodist church was a religious institution. It didn't pretend to have any other purpose nor function than to promote the getting of religion. There was no attempt to provide amusements or recreation, nor to make the church organization a club or a cult of any kind or character. The preachers and the members simply preached the old-time religion and insisted that every human being must get religion or go to hell. They were not so particular as to whether you joined the church, although it was usually urged that persons having got religion would do so. However, as a protection to the church and to prevent cluttering up their records, it was always provided that no matter how earnestly one professed religion, he must remain on probation for six months before being taken into the church. Experience showed that this was a wise provision, since many who professed religion did not remain stead-

fast long enough to become members of the church, and therefore the church officials were not compelled to carry them upon their books (if they kept books) as members, nor to indulge in the humiliating process of putting them out of the church because they had become backsliders.

It must be recorded that its ministers did not temporize with sin in any form, and that drinking, card-playing, dancing and other indulgences of worldly men and women were not classified as one being more sinful than the other, but all were condemned; and the person seeking religion was urged to put the devil behind him, which meant that he must abandon all self-indulgence and worldly pleasure and dedicate his life to service and sacrifice for good. Their ministers were sometimes embarrassed when called to preach the funeral of some person who had died in sin according to the doctrines of the church; but they were usually more or less resourceful at such times, and without giving way one jot or one tittle, and without indulging in elasticity of faith, they would manage to give comfort to be-

## *The Conversion of Cartmill*

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reaved friends and relatives, at the same time warning all of the uncertainty of life and the necessity of preparation for death.

The principal activity of the church consisted in holding a revival meeting once a year in the Berry Creek school-house, and during the winter of which this is written the meeting commenced early. Crops had ripened early in the fall, so that the corn was practically all shucked and in the crib by Thanksgiving time; potatoes and other vegetables had been gathered and cared for, and apples stored away in cellars or sealed up in great holes made in the ground. The meeting started off well. For some reason a good attendance was present the first night, and the preacher clustered his sermon and exhortation around the inquiry, "Where will you spend eternity?" It is not an exaggeration to say that during the next day hundreds of people, either directly or by grapevine-method, told others of the eloquence of the minister and of his earnestness, and of the fact that there seemed to be in the atmosphere of the meeting the presence

of the Holy Spirit that stirred them all in a wonderful way.

The weather was pleasant and the attendance at the meetings increased, as night after night the revival spirit animated those in attendance. After some days of good weather a rainy period set in, and this continued more than two weeks; but this did not halt the attendance nor dampen the fire that had been kindled at the meetings. Early in the evening the roads and trails would be full of persons afoot, on horseback, or in wagons, all happy and more or less noisy, making their way through the mud to the little school-house. The building would be crowded, and the windows thrown up so that persons standing on the outside under the eaves could hear and see all that was going on, and occasionally take part in the songs or exclamations which made up more or less of the service.

John MacDonald was trying to teach school during the daytime in the building, but he was having a hard time of it. He was his own janitor, and when he would come to build a fire in the morning and find two or

## *The Conversion of Cartmill*

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three inches of mud on the floor, and all of his kindling and ready fuel burned up, he would sometimes be exasperated. In fact, one evening at the meeting, among those who stood outside, it was reported that MacDonald had complained to the board, and a new convert expressed the sentiment of those present when he said :

“Hell, John’s all right ; but he’s a damn Presbyterian, and can’t be expected to know much about getting religion.”

Someone rebuked the speaker for using profanity, since he was one of the converts ; and modifying his language, he said :

“I’m durned if it ain’t purty hard to quit swearing, but I’m doing the best I can, and I think if this meeting runs on another week I’ll be all right.”

The meetings continued, and finally the rainy weather suddenly terminated, and the temperature went down lower and lower, until by Christmas time the thermometer showed zero weather, and day after day it was cold enough that sun-dogs followed the sun all day long.

## *Tales and Trails of Wakarusa*

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As the weather grew colder the meetings grew warmer. Practically everyone for miles around attended, and the most of them got religion. It was no unusual thing for awkward country lads who had never made a public address, to stand up and in eloquent though trembling voice profess their change of heart and their desire to do right, and without embarrassment exhort their friends to join them. Modest women who scorned unseemly conduct or notoriety would go up and down the little room urging those whom they knew to take advantage of the promises of God; and if they did at times shout and cry out, or jump up and down, or throw themselves upon the floor or the bench used for an altar, it was all because of the exaltation of the hour and a part of their good intent and good purpose. A dance in the neighborhood was simply out of the question, and it would have been hard to find a playing-card left unburned; and in their efforts to put away worldly things, many tobacco-soaked men gave up the use of the weed. One night a convert told of his experience in this behalf, and said he had had



## *The Conversion of Cartmill*

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some awful dreams, and one was that he was sitting on a hill north of the Wakarusa Valley, and that there was a terrible drouth, on account of which the river was dry, and that the devil came to him with a plug of tobacco that reached from him clear over to Carbon-dale, and that in his weakness he had chewed, and spit in the river, and that he had chewed the entire plug and had spit in the river until it run off as though there had been a terrible rain.

The meeting kept going, and finally Dr. Taylor, who had been counted as an unbeliever, came and got religion and helped in the exhortations. One night in urging the benefits of religion upon an audience, he pointed to George Franks, and said :

“Look, what the religion of Christ has done for Brother Franks. He was a wife-beater and a drunkard——”

Just there Brother Franks interrupted him, and half arising from his seat, he said :

“Brother, not a wife-beater.”

The Doctor corrected himself and went on with his illustration, which was just as good without the charge which was denied.

## *Tales and Trails of Wakarusa*

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John MacDonald, notwithstanding the incident hereinbefore related, became an attendant at the meeting, and more than once, in his conservative and humorous way, took part and showed his full appreciation of the spirit of reform and revival that pervaded the neighborhood, and his full sympathy with every honest effort to do good and make men lead better lives. And so they came from up and down the valley and everywhere, the rich and the poor, the good and the bad, the conservative and the excitable, and all were melted together in religious effort. It is true that there was sometimes confusion because different persons would insist upon singing their favorite hymn at the same time; but it did not seem out of the way when Mrs. Hughes, in recollection of earlier days in Wales, would sing, "I've Reached the Land of Corn and Wine;" and an old Scotchman would start up "I'm Far Frae My Hame, and I'm Weary Aften Whiles;" and another would sing "How Firm a Foundation Ye Saints of the Lord;" and another, "Shall We Gather at the River;" and all liable to be

## *The Conversion of Cartmill*

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interrupted by a grand old chap who would yell, rather than sing, "It's the Old Time Religion and It's Good Enough for Me."

It is not passing strange that many of the youngsters who attended the meeting simply considered the services as entertainment, although in later life in thinking it over they were able to understand that when men and women make up their minds to abandon selfish purposes and do right at all times and in all places they naturally become possessed of the spirit of happiness, of exaltation and praise that easily accounted for the wonderful services held during such a revival.

One day little Tommy Cartmill went to the teacher and said :

"I have lost my revolver somewhere about the school grounds, and if you are at church tonight I wish you would announce it so that if anyone finds it they will return it to me."

MacDonald was amazed that a little chap of thirteen years would be carrying a revolver, and after telling him what he thought about such practice, he said that he would undertake to find the lost weapon by making

## *Tales and Trails of Wakarusa*

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the announcement requested. That night the teacher made the announcement which he had promised, and this reminded those present that the old man Cartmill had not attended the meeting and was still out in the cold world of sin; and immediately many voices plead with the Lord that Cartmill might see the error of his ways, and that the Spirit might come down upon him, and that he might be saved. Whether because of the power of prayer or of the fact that his name had been mentioned at the meeting, it soon came about that Cartmill attended the services. He was a tall, strong, lanky Irishman, with a bushy head that looked as though it never had been combed, and his quarrels with Franks and other neighbors had made him more or less of a terror. He was entirely too large to use the ordinary school pupil's seat, and he therefore stood up near the door. He gave no indication of his attitude toward the meeting except to make a few scornful remarks now and then on the outside, but about the third night in the midst of a glorious period of exhortation and song he came bolt-

## *The Conversion of Cartmill*

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ing up the aisle like a mad buffalo; but as he turned around it was seen that tears streamed down his face, and commencing in a broken way, he implored the forgiveness of all whom he had wronged, and begged the prayers and help of all that he might get religion and be saved. Many crowded around him as he talked, and prayed for him, when he finally threw himself over the altar. George Franks and others whom he had terrorized put their arms around him and held to him and prayed for him as though he were the most precious mortal on earth. Finally he announced that the light had come to him, and he stood up to testify. Among other things he confessed that he had wronged Brother Franks, and he said:

“I have done more than any of yez know. I stole his plow, a new one, that he left in the field; and I didn’t stale it to kape it, but I stole it because of the divil that was in me; and I threw it in the Wakarusa in the dape hole by the big sycamore tree.”

This and many other confessions he made. The meeting held till far in the night, and

## *Tales and Trails of Wakarusa*

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after it had broken up one could hear people on their way home talking loud of what a glorious meeting it had been, and an occasional voice would praise the Lord for his power to forgive and wipe out sin. The next day some sturdy youngsters cut the ice in the deep hole, where it was more than a foot thick, and hooked and grappled around in the water until they found the lost plow, and they pulled it out and carried it home to Franks. So it was that the confession was verified, and a real loss restored and made good by the influence of religion.

It matters not whether the church books ever showed that Cartmill remained steadfast until he became a member, but it must be recorded that he did get religion, and that his religion changed, influenced and made better his life, and that from that time forward no man in the whole community was less to be feared or was more helpful or considerate in his dealings or contact with his neighbors.

## A Fourth of July Speech

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A FEW of the neighbors held a meeting to arrange for a Fourth of July picnic that was to be held in the grove near the big spring that breaks through the rocky banks of the Wakarusa one and a half miles below the stone bridge, and they had quite a dispute over whether they would invite John Martin or Joseph G. Waters to make the speech. An old mossback Democrat insisted that they have Martin. He said that Martin was a real Jeffersonian Democrat, and knew more about what the Fourth of July was made for than anybody else. A couple of younger men in the crowd insisted on having Joe Waters. They said that Joe was a Republican sure enough, but not Republican enough to hurt, and that he made a stem-windin' good speech. After considerable wrangle it was decided to invite Joe, and he consented to make the talk.

On the morning of the Fourth, along all the

## *Tales and Trails of Wakarusa*

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trails and roads people traveled, finding their way to the grove; and just about noon Captain Waters arrived with a livery team and buggy, with a negro boy driving; and he drove smashing and stomping in a reckless manner all around among the trees, almost running over some of the dinner baskets that were set about on the ground. The Captain took charge from the time he arrived. Everything that was done, he had to tell how to do it. One old woman had built a little fire between a couple of rocks to make some coffee, and he went up to her and told her that it was just as fair to drink coffee on the Fourth of July as on Christmas, and that he knew more about making coffee than the man who invented it. And in spite of her protests he made the coffee, and, of course, was welcome to help drink it.

After dinner, they backed a wagon up to an open place on the ground where some seats had been arranged, and Joe jumped in, and then reached for and pulled at the old man Kosier, who climbed up and called the crowd to order, made a few remarks on his own ac-



## *A Fourth of July Speech*

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count, and then introduced and started off the Captain.

Joe stretched up his arms and called loudly for everyone to draw near. He said that he proposed to ask some questions and find out some things before he decided whether he would make a speech to such a crowd. "First," he said, "I want to know why you call that man Big Aaron Coberly, and that one Little Aaron;" and as he spoke he pointed to Aaron, Senior, who weighed one hundred and forty pounds, and then to Aaron, Junior, who weighed two hundred and forty. An old lady's voice, cracked, but earnest, piped up:

"Big Aaron used to be the biggest—he was grown up when little Aaron was a baby."

"Fair enough," said Joe; and everybody laughed.

"Another thing," said Joe, "I want to know whether you people are up on figures or whether you are a bunch of joshers. I heard Dick Disney ask Coker what he would take for his lower eighty, and Coker said he would take sixteen hundred dollars for it. Dick said he'd be damned if he'd give it—he would

## *Tales and Trails of Wakarusa*

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give twenty dollars per acre and no more. Coker told him to go to hell; and just then Wash Berry, Bill Cartmill and a half a dozen others crowded around and told them they ought to compromise. This talk was pulled off within ten feet of me," said Joe in a loud voice, "and I want to know if you think you can play horse with me, or is it possible you're all crazy in your arithmetic?"

A youngster yelled, "It's you 'at's crazy," and ran off through the woods.

After several further inquiries of this character the Captain said he was satisfied, and would go on with his talk.

It was a great day for Joe, and the people too; and there are some of them now who remember different portions of his speech, and especially one part that was more or less prophetic of the destiny of our country and of the fact that our soldiers might have to serve across the seas. This part was as follows :

"If I see the flag in unending line flung high up the city's wall, shining and shimmering all day long, it is my flag, bless God! If far out on the bleak desert,

## *A Fourth of July Speech*

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parched, barren and desolate, I see it fluff and flutter about the white adobe walls of the fort, it is my flag. If far at sea beneath the unclouded sky, the sun sil-  
vering the endless billows, it rises out of the eternal depths in its rippling folds, my blood may chill, my eyes may fill, my heart may still, for it is my flag that crests the ocean. If in a strange and alien land, alone, solitary and homesick, the pomp of royalty on every hand, suddenly there should burst in view, way up the shaded avenue, the glory, red and white and blue, oh, for the Kaiser and his crown, on me and mine to then look down, I'd lift my head and proudly say, 'That is my flag you see today, and isn't it a dandy, eh?' And I would tell his ermined queen, of all the heavens and earth between, it is the grandest thing that flies, o'er land or sea, beneath the skies! And as the years may go, as falls the snow, as flowers may blow, come weal or woe, that banner is my flag, I know."

At the close of the day, the chairman of the committee was heard to remark :

"Well, considerin' as how Joe wouldn't take any pay, and insisted on paying for the livery horses himself, and then bought out the stand of all the candy and cigars and give it all away among the crowd—I guess we got our money's worth."



## The Phantom Fisherman and Other Ghosts

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ONE morning in early June a ten-year-old lad, having been given a half-holiday, dug a fine mess of luscious worms, put them in a tin can with plenty of good dirt, and started off up Berry Creek to fish for bullheads and sunfish. He went through the papaw patch and cut a nice long pole, and took time to fix his line on it in good shape, and to see that his cork, sinker, and hook were all right. He then went on through the woods, crossed the big ravines, and climbed around the rocky cliffs, making his way to the spot designated among the boys as the "bullhead hole." This was and is the best place on earth to fish for bullheads, and the boy knew it, and it was there he wanted to commence the day's sport. Finally he climbed over the last ledge, forced his way through the brush and came in sight of his favorite place, and, to his astonishment, he found an aged, peculiar-

looking man sitting under the old sycamore tree in the very spot where he had planned to be. He walked slowly up to a place as near the old man as good manners would permit, unwound his line and put on a good lively worm and commenced.

The old man paid no attention to him whatever, and, on watching him closely, the boy noticed that he was fishing for minnows with a pin-hook fastened to a thread, and this tied to a crooked stick. He put the minnows he caught into a tin bucket which was sitting at his feet, partially full of water. As soon as the boy noticed what he was doing, he set his pole and went up to him and offered to take off his shirt and help him seine for minnows with it. The old man looked up and said :

“Boy, I wouldn’t fish with minnows caught with the best seine on earth. Your shirt wouldn’t be much account as a seine; and anyway, they’re never big enough. I am on my way to Wakarusa, and I want some good, strong, live minnows. A man who fishes with seined minnows is no account. More than

that, you have no business to get your shirt wet. You tend to your fishin' and I'll tend to mine. Andrew Jackson said he knew a man who got rich tending to his own business."

This was a good deal of a bluff for the boy, and he proceeded as had been suggested, and "tended to his own business." It was a good morning for bullheads, and he soon got their range and commenced catching them. In fact, they were biting so well that he didn't stop to string any of those he caught, but threw them back on the bank; and just to see to it that the stranger did not forget he was there, he usually threw them toward the foot of the sycamore tree.

After a while the old man took his thread off the crooked stick and wound it up, poured most of the water off his minnows, and then filled the bucket again with fresh water, splashing it in with his hand so that it would be as full of oxygen as possible; and then he took out an old pipe and filled it, and as he commenced to smoke he looked around at the ground, spotted with wriggling bullheads and sunfish, and for the boy, who had ex-

perienced a lull in his activities long enough to allow him to commence to pick up and string the fish he had caught.

The boy looked at him, and he brightened up and said :

“Kid, you’re having a good time, and I don’t blame you. I am going down to Wakarusa to fish for big fish, but, after all, you’ve got more sense than I. The bullhead is the safest and surest fish for meat, and he’s not bad sport either, because he usually bites like he meant business, although he may be a little slow. The bullhead is a good deal like the rabbit in one way—he’s sure food. There’s more rabbit meat on foot in Kansas than there is beef or pork, and it’s all good. The buffalo was all right in his time, but even he didn’t come up to the rabbit. The bullhead reminds me of the rabbit, and the rabbit reminds me of the bullhead.”

The old man stopped talking, and acted as though he were about to start off, when the boy asked him where he was going on the Wakarusa to fish, and he said :

“I don’t know just where I’ll wind up. I



## *The Phantom Fisherman*

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have fished in every hole in Wakarusa from way above the Wakarusa falls down stream nearly to Lawrence, and sometimes I go to one place and sometimes to another. I've fished for bullheads, too, and for sunfish, in every place that the water is deep enough from the place where Berry Creek starts, over in the coal banks by Carbondale, down to the Sac and Fox spring and all along Lynn Creek, especially in the part that's full of boulders and little round pebbles, with here and there a riffle made by a broken flat rock. And boy, I want to tell you something—some days you can catch fish like you've been catching 'em this morning, and some days you can't. I've seen days so dull that even the bite of a crawfish was welcome."

The old man started off, and then came back and took the boy by the shoulder and almost shook him as he said :

"Don't tell anyone that you saw me. It's nobody's business." And then he went away.

The boy was not at all afraid, although the man was a total stranger, and looked and

## *Tales and Trails of Wakarusa*

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acted very queer. The next day he told Joe Coberly about meeting him, and Joe said :

“That old cuss is not real. He’s around here every once in a while, and always has been. Nobody knows where he lives nor where he comes from or goes to. He must have been in a good humor or you wouldn’t have caught so many fish, because he can give you good luck or bad luck ; and there’s always something strange happenin’ when you hear of him around. Last night something had one of my horses out and run him nearly to death ; his mane was all tied in knots this morning, and he was wringin’ wet with sweat when I went into the barn ; and the barn doors were all fastened just as I had left them, too. You never can tell what’s goin’ to happen when that old devil’s pretendin’ to fish up and down the creek.”

The boy told the story to a number of people, and soon found that practically all of the old-timers thought just the same as did Joe Coberly, and that they believed that there was something mysterious and unreal about the fisherman he met at the bullhead hole.

II.

The boy treasured up what had been told him about the ghost fisherman, and although he had been taught at home that there were no ghosts, every story of that nature interested him. One night he was at the home of Uncle Bill Matney. It was about ten o'clock, and they were all seated around the big fire that was roaring in the fireplace. Uncle Bill was playing "Natchez Under the Hill" on the fiddle, when suddenly they heard a horse coming on a dead run over the rocky road that led toward the house. The fiddle stopped, and everybody listened, and Uncle Bill said:

"That must be Little Jim Lynn. Nobody else is damn fool enough to ride like that."

Pretty soon the horse stopped by the side of the house, and they could all hear the saddle hit the ground, and then the bridle, after which the horse trotted away and Little Jim stalked into the house. As he pulled off his gloves and threw them in a corner, Uncle Bill said:

"What the hell's the matter, Jim?"

And Jim said :

“O, nothing, only a damn ghost—saw him down on the bluff by Mark Young’s corner.”

Jim was white as death, and everybody listened, but he didn’t say anything more until Uncle Bill said :

“War he beckonin’, Jim?”

And Jim said :

“No, he warn’t beckonin’, but he was there just the same.”

Uncle Bill tuned up his fiddle, and before he resumed playing, said :

“Well, if he warn’t beckonin’ it’s all right.”

Just at that point the boy broke in to inquire what difference it made whether the ghost was beckoning, and two or three explained to him that if a ghost beckoned to you that someone in your family would die within a year.

III.

The boy was just skeptic enough to have plenty of fun listening to ghost stories by people who believed or half way believed them ; and it became a habit of his to bring up the subject in talking with different people, and listen to their ghost stories if any might be provoked.

One spring he heard a ghost story that clung to him, and as he grew older and older the ghost in the story seemed more real. It was during the spring roundup of cattle, and he and an old Westerner had been riding and working together for a number of days cutting out and separating cattle, and taking some to one range and some to another, when, after a long day's ride over the hills of Wabunsee County, they found that they were not able to reach home, and made a camp at Wakarusa falls. They boiled some coffee and fried some salt meat, and this, together with some bread and some hard-boiled eggs, made a good supper. Afterwards they lay down with their saddles for pillows and commenced

the usual process of talking one another to sleep. Looking up at the stars and out at their dying fire, the boy thought of the phantom fisherman and other ghosts, and asked the old ranger what he knew about such. The old fellow stretched out on the ground, and reaching over took hold of the boy, as he said :

“Kid, I guess I’ve seen as many ghosts as anybody, but there’s one that I never forget, and it’s always comin’ back to me. Years ago, when I wasn’t any older than you, way back in York State, I coaxed my father and mother ever so many times to let me come out West. We had some folks living out this way, and from the letters they wrote, I was crazy to come out here. They didn’t want me to come, and said I ought to go to school, and tried to make me go to school; but I wouldn’t do any good in school nor at anything else, and once or twice I run away from home, and they caught me and brought me back. One day my mother called me into the house, and I noticed that my father was sitting down at the table and that there was a

## *The Phantom Fisherman*

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chair near his where she had been sitting. She asked me to sit down, and she pulled up another chair, and then she said: 'Jack, we've been talking about you, and we know that you want to go out West, and that you want to go so bad that you're not doin' any good here. Your Paw and I have talked it over, and thought it over, and prayed over it, and we think that maybe it would be best for you to go, and we're goin' to give you what we can spare and let you strike out.' We hadn't had a letter from the folks in the West for a long time, but we hunted up the old address, and Mother tied up a big bundle of clothes for me, and they gave me a railroad ticket and nine dollars and fifty cents, which was all the money they had in the house. On the day I left I started for the station on foot, and looked back many times because Father and Mother both were hanging over the gate watching me go. I don't know how many times I looked back, Kid, but I do know that I looked back enough that the looks of them has been with me all these years; and lots and lots of times it seems to me that I can

## *Tales and Trails of Wakarusa*

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see the old man as he held up his hand and yelled 'Goodbye, boy, goodbye!' and Ma right by his side. It may be that there ain't any real ghosts for some people, but them old faces are real when they come back to me. It's more than thirty years, and ever so long I thought I'd go back and see them some day, and I used to write them that I would, but I never did; and they're both gone now. Their ghost is all I have, and I kind o' like it, and wouldn't trade it off for anything in the world."

As the story ended the stars gradually went out for the boy, and he thought no more of ghosts until morning. Since then, he has accumulated quite a number of ghosts of his own of the same kind and character as the ones that followed the old cattleman, all born of the grief of separation, and they are all real to him and have become part of his life.



## An Indian Christmas

(A legend of the camp by the spring.)

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ON Christmas night the Indian camp was a noisy place. The fires were burning brightly in every tepee, and shouts and laughter told of the good time that was being had by everyone as a part of the celebration that the old French priest had taught them to have.

Outside the wind was blowing cold, with skiffs of snow. A strange boy wandered into the camp. He stopped at the tent of the chief and asked that he be admitted and given food and allowed to get warm. The chief drove him away. He went to the tent of Shining Star and tried to be admitted, but Shining Star grunted, and his boys drove him away with whips. He then went to many of the tents, including those of Eagle Eye and Black Feather, but none would receive him, and at one they set a dog upon him. His feet were bare, and tears were frozen on his cheeks.

He was about to leave the camp, when he noticed a small tepee made of bearskin off by itself. He walked slowly to it, and quietly peeped in. Inside he saw the deformed Indian, who was known everywhere by the name of Broken Back. His squaw sat near him, preparing a scanty meal for them and their children. The children were playing on the ground, but were watching their mother closely, for they were hungry. The fire was low, and the boy started to turn away, and broke a twig that lay on the ground.

Broken Back ran out and stopped him as he was about to turn away.

“What do you want?” he said.

The boy commenced to cry.

“I am so cold and hungry,” he said, “and I have been to all the tents, and they will not let me in.”

Then Broken Back took him by the hand and led him into the tent, and they divided the food with him, and built up the fire until he became warm and happy. They urged him to stay all night and until the storm was over.

So he sat on the ground near the fire and

## *An Indian Christmas*

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talked and played with the children until it was time to go to sleep.

Then he stood up, and they all noticed that he was tall, and as they looked they saw that he was a man instead of a boy. His clothes were good, and over his shoulder hung a beautiful blanket, and over his head was a bonnet with feathers of strange birds upon it. As they looked, he reached out his hand and said :

“Broken Back, you have been good to a poor, cold and hungry boy. You and all of yours shall have plenty.”

And Broken Back stood up; and he was deformed no more, but was large and strong and well, and his squaw stood by his side, and both were dressed in the best of Indian clothes. The children jumped about with joy, as they noticed that they were at once supplied with many things that they had always wanted.

“Broken Back,” he said, “you shall be chief of your tribe. And all of your people shall love and respect and honor you. And

*Tales and Trails of Wakarusa*

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your name shall be Broken Back no longer, but shall be Holy Mountain.”

And as they talked, all of the Indians of the tribe came marching about his tent shouting in gladness, “Great is Holy Mountain, our chief, forever.”

As they shouted, he disappeared, and they saw him no more.

The next day the good priest came to the camp, and they told him what had happened, and he said, “It was Jesus.”







